



[Home](#) > [Medical Reference](#) > [Patient Education](#)

## WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC DRUGS USED TO PREVENT ASTHMA ATTACKS AND REDUCE AIRWAY INFLAMMATION?

### Corticosteroids


Corticosteroids, also called glucocorticoids or steroids, are powerful anti-inflammatory drugs. Steroids are not bronchodilators (that is, they do not relax the airways) and have little effect on symptoms. Instead, they work over time to reduce inflammation and prevent permanent injury in the lungs. Many studies have now shown that the use of inhaled corticosteroids in patients with moderate to severe asthma significantly reduce the rate of rehospitalizations and deaths from asthma. Nevertheless, they are still significantly underprescribed in the patients who need them most.

*Inhaled Corticosteroids.* Inhalation of corticosteroids makes it possible to provide effective local anti-inflammatory activity in the lungs with minimal systemic effects. (Oral steroids have considerable side effects.) They are currently recommended as the primary therapy under the following circumstances:


- For any asthmatic condition more serious than occasional episodes of mild asthma. (Low-doses of inhaled steroids may even be safe and effective for some people with mild asthma, particularly those who find themselves using beta2-agonists daily.)
- When treatment with bronchodilators is not effective.

Examples of inhaled corticosteroids are the following:

- The most recent generation of inhaled steroids include (in order of potency) fluticasone (Flovent), budesonide (Pulmicort), triamcinolone (Azmacort and others), and flunisolide (AeroBid). In general, the newer agents, are more powerful than the older generation of inhaled agents. Experts have some concern, then, that these potent agents, particularly fluticasone, may produce major side effects similar to oral agents. Studies are now suggesting, however, that the same benefits can be achieved with low doses of fluticasone as with high doses, thus reducing risks for serious side effects. (Of note, budesonide appears to be safe during pregnancy.)
- The older corticosteroid inhalants are beclomethasone (Beclovent, Vanceril) and dexamethasone (Decadron Phosphate Respihaler and others). They are less powerful than the newer steroids when delivered with standard inhalers. New inhaler systems for, however, such as QVAR, which uses extra fine formulation of beclomethasone to allow deep delivery into the lungs may prove to be as effective as the newer, more potent steroids.
- Inhalers that combine both long-acting beta2-agonists and corticosteroids are now available. [ See Combinations of Corticosteroids and Long-Acting Beta2 Agonists.]



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**Active Ingredients:** Budesonide Inhaler

**Representative Names:** Pulmicort

**Available Product Images:** 

[What is budesonide inhalation powder?](#)

[What should my health care professional know before I use budesonide?](#)

[How should I use this medicine?](#)

[What if I miss a dose?](#)

[What drug\(s\) may interact with budesonide?](#)

[What side effects may I notice from using budesonide?](#)

[What should I watch for while taking budesonide?](#)

[Where can I keep my medicine?](#)

**What is budesonide inhalation powder?** [\(Back to top\)](#)

BUDESONIDE (Pulmicort Turbuhaler®) is a corticosteroid for treating respiratory problems. It helps to decrease the inflammation, swelling, and irritation in your lungs that is caused by asthma or other lung diseases. Regular use of budesonide inhalation powder will help prevent asthma attacks, but it is not for rapid relief of asthma attacks. Generic budesonide inhalation powder is not yet available.

**What should my health care professional know before I use budesonide?** [\(Back to top\)](#)

They need to know if you have any of these conditions:


- Cushing's syndrome
- infection such as herpes, or tuberculosis
- recent surgery or trauma
- an unusual or allergic reaction to budesonide, steroids, other medicines, foods, dyes, or preservatives
- pregnant or trying to get pregnant
- breast-feeding

**How should I use this medicine?** [\(Back to top\)](#)

Budesonide is for inhalation through the mouth. Follow the directions on the prescription label. A new inhaler should be primed before use. Follow the priming instructions that come with the inhaler. The instructions will also tell you what position to hold the inhaler when loading or inhaling a dose. Always hold the inhaler in the appropriate position so that no medication is lost.

Load the dose as instructed. Do not shake the inhaler after loading it. Turn your head away from the inhaler and breathe out. Place the mouthpiece between your lips and inhale deeply and forcefully. You may not taste or feel the medication. Remove the inhaler from your mouth and exhale. Do not blow or exhale into the mouthpiece. Do not chew or bite on the mouthpiece. If more than one dose is required, repeat the steps above. Rinse your mouth with water; do not swallow the water.

**Additional Information**

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Back

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## budesonide inhalation

Pronunciation: bew DEH so nide

Brand: Pulmicort Respules, Pulmicort Turbuhaler

### What is the most important information I should know about budesonide inhalation?

- Budesonide inhalation will not stop an asthma attack that has already started. It is used to prevent attacks.



- Do not use more of this medication than is prescribed for you. Too much may cause serious side effects.
- Use budesonide inhalation on a regular basis for best results. It may take several weeks to get the maximum effect of this medication.
- It is very important that you use your budesonide inhaler or nebulizer properly, so that the medicine gets into your lungs. Talk to your doctor about proper inhaler or nebulizer use.
- Seek medical attention if you notice that you require more than your usual or more than the maximum amount of any asthma medication in a 24-hour period. An increased need for medication could be an early sign of a serious asthma attack.

### What is budesonide inhalation?

- Budesonide is a steroid. It prevents the release of substances in the body that cause inflammation.
- Budesonide inhalation is used to prevent asthma attacks.
- Budesonide may also be used for purposes other than those listed in this medication guide.

### Who should not use budesonide inhalation?



- Before using budesonide inhalation, tell your doctor if you have a viral, bacterial, or fungal infection of any kind. The absorption of this drug into your system can inhibit your body's ability to fight off infections. You may not be able to use budesonide inhalation if you have an infection.
- Budesonide inhalation will not stop an asthma attack that has already started. It is used to prevent attacks. Do not use budesonide inhalation to treat an asthma attack. If you are having an asthma attack that is not responding to any treatment, seek emergency medical attention.
- Budesonide inhalation is in the FDA pregnancy B. This means that it is not expected to harm an unborn baby. Do not use this medication without first talking to your doctor if you are pregnant.
- It is not known whether budesonide passes into breast milk. Do not use budesonide inhalation without first talking to your doctor if you are breast-feeding a baby.

### How should I use budesonide inhalation?

- Use budesonide inhalation exactly as directed by your doctor. Read the information insert included with your inhaler. If you do not understand these directions, ask your pharmacist,